WILDLIFE CONSERVATION

Conservation Notes from Canada

Following the recent discovery of the nesting-grounds of Ross's Goose near the Perry River, in a remote part of the Northwest Territories, Canada has placed a complete closed season on this species in the Northwest Territories and Alberta, which are the only parts of the Dominion in which it usually occurs.

James Bay, the southern arm of Hudson Bay, is an important area for migrating geese, ducks, and shorebirds, because the conformation of northeastern North America causes several migration routes to meet there and abundant food is available over large areas. The principal waterfowl species in that region are the Blue Goose, Lesser Snow Goose, Canada Goose, Pintail, Black Duck, and Green-winged Teal. Sanctuary areas in which waterfowl receive complete protection throughout the year have been established on the islands and coast of James Bay in recent years as shown below. Those established by the Dominion Government are in the Northwest Territories and the Province of Quebec, the governments of which concurred in each case in the action taken.

Sanctuary	Approximate area	Established by	Year
Hannah Bay Waterfowl Sanctuary	60 sq. mi.	Ontario	1938
Hannah Bay Bird Sanctuary	40 sq. mi.	Dominion	1939
Twin Islands Game Sanctuary	55 sq. mi.	Dominion	1939
Boatswain Bay Bird Sanctuary	60 sq. mi.	Dominion	1941
Akimiski Island Bird Sanctuary	1,100 sq. mi.	Dominion	1941
Total area	1,315 sq. mi., or 841,600 acres		

On the coast and islands of James Bay there have also been established during the past decade, by complementary action of the Dominion Government and the provinces concerned, six large beaver preserves, with a total area of about 30,000 square miles, in which beaver may not be taken until the population of these animals is ascertained to be at a suitable level and where they may then be trapped only under strict control, to avoid undue depletion. Of these preserves, two are in Ontario, two in Quebec, and two in the Northwest Territories. The establishment of several additional large preserves of this kind in this region in the near future is projected.

Beaver conservation aids waterfowl by increasing the number of beaver ponds and by shifting some of the hunting pressure of Indians from waterfowl to beaver.—Harrison F. Lewis.

"Trumpeter Swan populations since annual counts have been made are as follows, according to the Fish and Wildlife Service:

1934— 33	1938—148
1935— 73	1939—199
1936—114	1940—190
1937—168	1941—211"

(*Wildlife News,* October 15, 1941: 12)

Pollution

Recently the attention of Ohio authorities has been called to the increased pollution by oil of the lower Maumee River and Maumee Bay at the western end of Lake Erie. Because of the war, traffic in oil products has increased much and has resulted in the dumping of greatly increased amounts of oil wastes in the river and bay. Because of haste in loading the boats, oil is spilled into the bilge in greater than usual quantities and this in turn is dumped with the bilge water into the river and bay.

So far, the damage to wildlife from the increased oil pollution has been slight. In July there was a killing of several species of fishes, comprising hundreds of individuals. At that time observations were made upon many hundreds of water birds, chiefly gulls and terns, for possible oil on their plumage. A few individuals with stained plumage were found, but no birds were noted with feathers soaked enough to render them flightless.

This instance is given to demonstrate an increased hazard to our wildlife which is occurring in many sections of the United States. Some addition to our waters of pollutants, in this period of stress, is unavoidable; however, in many cases the discharge of increased amounts of injurious pollutants can be avoided. In the case cited above, the bilge water from boats can be emptied farther out into Lake Erie, where the greater amount of water and wave action will minimize the effects of the oil wastes.

Fortunately the situation is not hopeless, even in those areas where an increase of oil pollutants is at present unavoidable. The dumping of oil wastes into a small stream in Wayne County, Michigan, a few years previous to 1934, so badly polluted Gibraltar Bay, a part of the Detroit River system, that many fishes were killed and some species eliminated from the bay. For a few winters thereafter ducks of several species resorted to the bay in numbers, apparently because the oily waters did not freeze as quickly as did the adjacent river. The result was that dozens of birds died and the oil soaked plumage of others rendered them temporarily flightless. The polluting of these waters had stopped by 1935, and conditions had begun to improve. By the summer of 1941 favorable conditions in the bay had been restored, the once abundant and desirable types of vegetation had returned, and there was the usual population of fishes, birds, and other animals.

The evidence obtained at Gibraltar Bay, and many other oil polluted waters elsewhere, indicates that rather rapid and almost complete recovery can be expected if the discharging into the waters of the deleterious effluent is entirely stopped, or a partial recovery if the amount is appreciably lessened.

It is suggested that observers watch for evidence of increased pollution, and if found, the proper authorities should be informed, so that possible corrective measures may be employed.—M. B. Trautman.

Indian Service

"For the first time in history, biologists have been assigned to work permanently at wildlife problems on Indian reservations. Effective August 7, and only recently made public, a cooperative agreement was signed by officials of the Indian Service and the Fish and Wildlife Service providing for a Section of Indian Reservation Wildlife under the direction of Dr. W. B. Bell, Chief of the Division of Wildlife Research of the latter Division.

"Head of the new Section is Clifford Presnall...." (*Wildlife News*, October 15, 1941: 1)

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE,
Frederick N. Hamerstrom, Jr., Chairman